

CLASS STRUGGLE IN *SPARTACUS* MOVIE
DIRECTED BY ROBERT DORNHELM:
A MARXIST APPROACH



RESEARCH PAPER

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BAB I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Spartacus movie is directed by Robert Dornhelm and based upon adaptation from Howard Fast novel. It is Vesuvius Productions and distributed by USA cable entertainment. The producers in this movie are: Michele Greco, Ted Kurdyla, Angela Mancuso, Judith Craig Marlin, Robert Schenkkan and Adam Shapiro. The running time of *Spartacus* movie is about 167 minute / 2 hours 57 minutes. The release date of this movie is around April, 7, 2004 and the budget of this movie \$ 5.000.000.

“Spartacus” is a powerful movie from novel Howard Fast of ancient slave society with rich meaning for the liberation struggle of our day. The story of Spartacus and his army slave warriors is one of the great epics of history, and begun in the early of 71Century B.C, a quickly organized force of 70.000 runaway slaves. Led by Spartacus and his heroic band of escaped gladiators , held the military might of Rome at bay for almost four years, routing its legions, establishing control over most of southern Italy, and threatening the “Eternal City “ itself.

This movie is interesting to study about the phenomenon of society life, there are divided into four aspects to study. The first aspect is Spartacus movie story about class struggle their war toward Roman Republic for getting

freedom humanism. This happened between 71-73 BC, their revolutionary struggle for freedom - which historians euphemistically call "The Servile War" and "The Gladiatorial War" - forecast the day, some four centuries hence, when the maturing revolution of the slaves would pave the way for the "Barbarian invasions" and destruction of the Roman Empire - and along with it the slave mode of production upon which it rested. Spartacus is slave and gladiator from Thracian.

The second aspect, Spartacus revolt is inspiration for proletariat. The film is based on the novel by Howard Fast. In the film the slaves are shown as following Spartacus to the bitter end, but in the book the slaves are held responsible for the failure of the war. Fast, as a good Stalinist, had nothing but contempt for the working class. This is reflected in the book where the slaves are portrayed as not being up to Spartacus's revolutionary ideals. From the fact that he was "a genuine representative of the ancient proletariat": in other words, he was a product of the struggle of an exploited class which dared to challenge its exploiters. In a world still based on the exploitation of one class by another, Spartacus remains a potent symbol for the modern proletariat, which has the capacity to end all forms of slavery once and for all. The Roman oppressors defeat the seeming invincible legions time and time again. This revolt, though bloodily crushed, has inspired revolutionary movements in short for democracy against dictatorship.

The third aspect is structural elements including: the character & characterization, theme, plot, setting, and style. The theme of the movie: to be the struggle for "human freedom" against a dictatorial society dominated by aristocratic elites. The title of this movie describes that Spartacus movie though is carried out by a different exploited class, but it can really only be understood and claimed by the movement of the exploited class in this society, the modern proletariat. This movie uses progressive plot (straight plot), called straight plot if event in the story walked chronologically, one event causes the next event. The setting is divided into 5 parts, the setting of place in The Gladiator School of Lentulus Batiatus, Capua, Sicily, Cilician, Rome and setting time in 73 BC. The last aspect is the philosophical that concerns Robert Dornhelm director portrays how human created by god have equality in life and right, everybody people struggle to get dream, change his life and not oppressor or master.

Proletariat refers to the labor or workers including anyone who earns their livelihood by selling their labor power and being paid a wage or salary for their labor time. They have little choice but to work for capital, since they capitalistically have no independent way to survive. Capital refers to the bourgeois or capitalists include anyone who gets their income not from labor as much as from the surplus value they appropriate from the workers who create wealth. The income of the capitalists, therefore, is based on their exploitation of the workers or proletariat (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/class_struggle). The world changes time to time and the development of industry makes an effort to

make a progress. As Marxist assumes that “all societies are progressing toward communism” (Bressler ,1999 : 212).

One basic reason of class struggle is economic this is happened because economic is very important thing to make level of social class in the society. Because of this, the rich people always get everything what they want and honesty as the low. Level workers fell oppressed by the bourgeoisie by class struggle, they hope can shape ownership of the capital and means of production. In order to get the exploitation out from their life, it means, they will get equal class especially in economic.

The gap between social classes in society is caused by many factors, the main factor is that these are two groups in society such as up-level class, and low level class ([http //: www.lib blcu .edu.cn/per/981 /en/e-1-2 htm](http://www.lib.blcu.edu.cn/per/981/en/e-1-2.htm)). Marx stated that “there always progress in the society to go class less society. Believing progress is reactionary or revolutionary” (Bressler, 1999: 212) The revolutionist movement is made by oppressed to get the equality with their oppressor.

Karl Marx defined class in terms of the extent to which individual or social group has control over the means of production (from: marxism.[http // en.wikipedia org /wiki /marxism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/marxism)). Class struggle is fundamental theory and as a central part of Marxism” (Sargent, 1987: 86-87). It is hypothesis used by marx to explain a movement. Class struggle it is “the condition between production method and productive relationship that happen through the

classes in the society” (Sargent, 1987: 86 -87).According on Marxist believes that in its pure form capitalist society divided into two powerful social classes. Social classes refers to the hierarchical distinctions between two groups is between the powerful and powerless.

Marxist criticism views that “literature as the mirror of social reality that influenced the reality so can make up the society” (Atmazaki ,1984 : 18). Literature is mirror up to nature. The writer tries to breakdown the problem in Spartacus movie, by using Marxist approach. In this study, the writer encourages herself to give title “Class Struggles in Spartacus’ movie directed by Robert Dornhelm adaptation takes from Howard Fast novel.

B. Literary Review

In this study, the researcher does not find the other research. So this is the research paper that conducts *Spartacus* movie to be analyzed through Marxist perspective.

On the other hand, Dewi (2005) conducted a research entitled: The Class Struggle of William Wallace in Mel Gibson’s *Brave Heart* Movie: Marxist approach. The writer would like to present previous research related to Marxist approach with different object. Therefore this research will study about the different object in the “Class Struggles in Spartacus’ movie directed by Robert Dornhelm adaptation takes from Howard Fast novel by Marxist approach.

C. Problem Statement

Based on the research of the study, the problem proposed in the research is: “How is class struggle reflected in *Spartacus* movie directed by Robert Dornhelm ?”

D. Objective of the Study

1. To clarify with analyze the movie in terms of its structural elements.
2. To analyze the movie based on Marxist Approach.

E. Limitation of the Study

This research paper limits the study only that concerns with analysis on class struggles in *Spartacus* movie, especially viewed by Marxist perspective.

F. Benefits of the Study

By analyzing *Spartacus* movie, 2 benefits can be expected:

1. Theoretical Benefit :

The study is expected to give contribute and additional information to the larger body of the knowledge particularly to the further studies of *Spartacus* movie.

2. Practical Benefits

The study also gives deeper understanding in literary field as the reference to the researchers in analyzing this movie.

The study is expected to enrich the knowledge of the researcher and readers about *Spartacus* movie in Marxism Perspective.

G. Research Method.

The research method of this paper is broken down into 5 aspects:

1. Type of the Study

The type of this study is qualitative research. Means this study is more grounded. Qualitative study is the study of the fact concerns with individual behavior and the results of this study can not be fact using numbers in analyzing the data found in the movie.

2. Object of the Study

Object of the research is the class struggles in *Spartacus* movie use Marxist approach.

3. Type of the Data and the Data Source

The primary data are taken from the texts of *Spartacus* movie, it consists of dialogue, plot, themes, conflicts, and the whole narration, etc, which are relevant to the object of the study. While the secondary

data sources are taken from some books, web sites, other literary and also other matters which support this analysis.

4. Technique of the Data and the Data Source

The writer uses library research in collecting data, which involves several steps:

- a) Searching the script of the film from internet.
- b) Reading the script repeatedly.
- c) Marking the point in the script to make easy in analyzing it.
- d) Taking notes of important in both primary and secondary data.
- e) Classifying the data into groups according categories of elements of literary study.
- f) Selecting them by rejecting the irrelevant sources, which doesn't have important information to support the topic of the study?

5. Technique of the Data Analysis

The writer uses Marxist approach and applies it by using the descriptive analysis. In addition, the writer also uses the structural analysis of the work. Firstly, the data are arranged in a list of data. Secondly, the researcher is looking for a selecting the correlation of data by using the chosen approach. Thirdly, all data from the second step are arranged. Finally, a conclusion is drawn.

H. Research Paper Organization

The organization of this research is explained in order the reader is able to understand. This paper is divided into 6 chapters: Chapter I is introduction that is covers background of the study, literary review, problem statement, objective of the study, limitation of the study, the benefits of the study, research method, research paper organization. Chapter II is underlying theory. It will discuss with the notion of Marxist theory, major principle, Marxist theory and literary criticism, Marxist critical assumption, and theoretical application. Chapter III is social historical Roman in 71-73 before Christian ancient (BC) includes social aspect, politic aspect, economic aspect, religious, cultural aspect, scientific and technology aspect. Chapter IV is structural analysis of the movie. In this chapter, the writer will present analysis structural element of the movie and discussion. Chapter V is Marxist analysis and discussion. Chapter VI is conclusion and suggestion.